United Nations

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Canada, says he hopes to send mission to Haiti within weeks to convince military to cede power to legitimate Government and avoid intervention by multinational force.

+ Secretary-General sends fact-finding mission to Liberia to review status of peace process; voices concern at deteriorating situation and prospects for UNOMIL and ECOMOG.

+ High Commissioner for Human Rights says 26 human rights monitors and observers will be in Rwanda when French troops leave; Commisssion of Experts on humanitarian violations begins work in Geneva.

+ Special Representative Akashi holds extensive and constructive talks with Bosnian Government in Sarajevo; to visit Pale soon for talks with Bosnian Serbs.

+ United Nations launches inter-agency appeal for $22 million to meet humanitarian needs in Yemen.

+ WFP warns of famine in Malawi because of insufficient food donations after drought and crop failure.

+ Secretary-General designates Special Representative Joe Clark as UNFICYP Chief of Mission; appoints Colonel Ahti Toimi Paavali Vartiainen of Finland as Force Commander.

+ United Nations to host seminar on Ethnic Diversity and Public Policies from 17 to 19 August.

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On a visit to Canada today, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said he hoped to send a mission to Haiti within weeks to convince the military authorities to implement Security Council resolution 940 (1994) and avoid a military invasion. That resolution called for the restoration of the legitimate Government in Haiti in accordance with the Governors Island

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Agreement. It also authorized a multinational force under unified command and control to use "all necessary means" to facilitate the departure of the military authorities and the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The Secretary-General was in Moncton, New Brunswick, at the invitation of Prime Minister Jean Chretien. During a meeting with the Prime Minister, he expressed thanks for Canada's financial and political support for the United Nations, citing its participation in peace-keeping operations in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and elsewhere. He was scheduled to address the Acadian World Reunion, and to receive an honorary degree from Moncton University, later in the day.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to send a fact-finding mission to Liberia to review the situation there and the status of the peace process, according to a United Nations spokesman. The mission, scheduled to leave Thursday, will consult with the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the Liberian National Transitional Government. It will be headed by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi and will include members from the Departments of Political Affairs, Peace-keeping Operations, Humanitarian Affairs and Public Information.

The Secretary-General has expressed increasing concern at the deteriorating situation in Liberia and the uncertain prospects for the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and the Economic Community of West African States' Military Observer Group (ECOMOG). To date, only 3,500 of an estimated 60,000 combatants have been disarmed. Meanwhile, the national elections originally planned for May and postponed until September will have to be rescheduled.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, announced today in Geneva that 26 human rights monitors and observers would be in Rwanda by the time French troops left the country on 22 August. Mr. Ayala Lasso will visit Rwanda and Burundi from 18 to 21 August, where he will meet with Government leaders and representives of humanitarian agencies

Meanwhile, the Commisssion of Experts set up to investigate grave humanitarian violations in Rwanda began work yesterday in Geneva. The Commission is scheduled to send a mission to Rwanda on 22 August and is mandated to report to the Secretary-General by the end of November.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi described his talks today with Bosnian Government officials as extensive, friendly and constructive. He told correspondents in Sarajevo that he was particularly pleased by the restraint shown by Bosnian Government forces at a very delicate and crucial period in international negotiations. He said that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) would continue its efforts to secure the reopening of the Sarajevo

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airport routes and the airport at Tuzla, and would show "resourceful strength" in other areas.

The Special Representative underlined UNPROFOR's commitment to achieving the release of detainees and prisoners, as well as dealing with ethnic cleansing and other violations of human rights. "One would expect progress step-by-step," he said.

The negotiations which had taken place in Geneva in conjunction with the proposals by the Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia had probably intensified Serb feelings against the international community, Mr. Akashi continued. That development had complicated UNPROFOR's own negotiating efforts. He said he would soon visit Pale to discuss the matter, and stressed that it was in the interest of all parties to show a spirit of compromise and to cooperate with the United Nations.

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The United Nations today launched a consolidated inter-agency appeal for almost $22 million to meet urgent humanitarian needs in Yemen through next February. Some 375,000 people have suffered from displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and shortages of food and water since the conflict there earlier this year. Despite the cessation of hostilities on 7 July, landmines continue to threaten the lives of civilians and are hampering efforts to restore water and electricity supplies to Aden and Abyan.

The appeal is the result of a United Nations inter-agency mission to Yemen last month. The mission, which was led by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, comprised representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

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The World Food Programme (WFP) today warned that up to 3 million people in Malawi face famine because donors have not pledged enough food to make up the country's food deficit after a drought and crop failure this year. Malawi needs more than 180,000 metric tons of cereal food aid, but pledges to date cover only 40 per cent of that figure.

Malawi's crop failure and food deficit have been overshadowed by the tragedy in Rwanda, according to the WFP. It warned that international neglect could jeopardize Malawi's transition to democracy and political pluralism after decades of single party rule.

"We cannot yet show on television people dying of hunger and we hope we never do," said Lufu Tomoka, Executive Secretary of the Council of Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi. "But if food aid doesn't reach Malawi quickly, the weakest, especially children, will die. A tragedy can be averted if donors act quickly."

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has designated Special Representative Joe Clark as Chief of Mission in the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). During Mr. Clark's absence, Mr. Gustave Feissel, who is resident in Cyprus, will assume that function.

The Secretary-General named Colonel Ahti Toimi Paavali Vartiainen of Finland to succeed Major-General Michael Minehane of Ireland as Force Commander of UNFICYP. Colonel Vartiainen will be promoted to the rank of Major General upon taking up the appointment.

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New approaches to stem ethnic conflict will be discussed at a seminar on "Ethnic Diversity and Public Policies" at Headquarters from 17 to 19 August. Organized by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, a Geneva-based autonomous think tank, and co-sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the seminar will be a prelude to the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.

The seminar is expected to attract more than 150 policy makers, academics and journalists from around the world. They will discuss the situations in specific countries, and such issues as third-party intervention and peace-keeping efforts, the dynamics of ethnic disputes, and the role of the media in ethnic conflicts.

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